

LONG ISLAND FORUM



MacNish's Hotel, New Suffolk, Following the Era of Summer Boarders.

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**THE
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FORUM**

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FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE

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PAUL BAILEY, Publisher-Editor
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Clarence A. Wood, LL.M., Ph.D.
John C. Huden, Ph.D.
Robert R. Coles
Julian Denton Smith, Nature

Cream Pot Hill, Glen Cove

Re the query of Nassau County
Historian Jesse Merritt in the June
Forum, it was always our impres-
sion that most of Cream Pot Hill
was in Glen Cove. Our Foreman of
Mails John Matthews states that
his grandfather James Matthews
owned four acres of excellent graz-
ing land on top of what is known as
Cream Pot Hill. The quantity and
quality of the cream produced by
his cows was great, hence the
name.

John R. Clark,
Finance Clerk
Glen Cove P. O.

MacNish's Hotel, New Suffolk

MacNish's at New Suffolk was
one of the important summer
hotels of Southold town during the
1880s-90s. It stood on the site of
the present village baseball dia-
mond. It is easy to visualize the
city people arriving there with
Saratoga trunks, prepared to sit
on the big piazza and rock (but
not roll) or take a dip in Peconic
Bay, the ladies attired in straw-
hats tied under the chin, heavy
black stockings and canvas bathing
shoes, or drive the dusty roads in
a surrey with the fringe on top.

Proprietor Walter MacNish
leased the hotel in 1894 to one
William H. Grant who ran it until
the automobile sounded the death
knell for country summer board-
ing places generally. With its years
of usefulness over, the building
was sold in sections and moved to
various nearby lots. The main por-
tion went to a site two blocks to
the east and there it slowly dis-
integrated. One night during a
heavy wind it collapsed but it must
have gone down very gently as
none of the neighbors heard any
accompanying noise above the
storm.

With the old hotel gone, however,
New Suffolk's reputation as a pop-
ular fishing and boating centre
still remained. It is a unique little
hamlet with no church or fire
department of its own, depending
on nearby Cutchogue for such
things. But it has a school and the
village streets are laid out in a

Continued on page 148

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Wreck of the Circassian in 1876

THE loss of ten braves in the Circassian disaster on the bar off Bridgehampton in December of 1876 was a blow from which the Shinnecock tribe never recovered. A report in the columns of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle at the time maintained that "the tribe is now about depleted, the men remaining at the reservation being few, and but one of them able to labor." Thirty-seven years after the shipwreck a reporter from the same paper interviewed Chief Wickham Cuffee, then ninety-five years of age, for the issue of November 16, 1913. In the course of the interview, the aged sachem recalled the disaster, which "wiped out some of the best bloods we had." "That," he sadly acknowledged, "was a sad time for the Shinnecock Indians."

The Circassian was obviously reserved by fate for maritime disaster. There had been ample warning that the iron vessel would never rust in rotten row. Misfortune had hounded her for years. With an assorted cargo on board bound for rebellion during the Civil War, the British ship had been captured as a Southern blockade runner in the Gulf of Mexico by the Somerset, a converted Fulton ferryboat, under humiliating circumstances. She had plowed on one occasion into the treacherous sands off lonely Cape Sable, and in the middle of December, 1869, en route from New Orleans to New York, she had been driven ashore at Squan Beach on the New Jersey coast.

When she grounded on the bar about one-half mile off Bridgehampton in a blinding snowstorm on the night of December 11, 1876, it was the third time in her twenty-year history that she was stranded. The uneasy crew of the ill-fated vessel had had

Dr. Charles A. Huguenin

Editor's Note

Although the Forum carried the story of the wreck of the Circassian some years ago, Dr. Huguenin has approached the subject from a different angle, having gone to the newspapers of that day to obtain eyewitness reports of the disaster which shocked the country.

sufficient forewarning. The fact that she was appraised a first class ship with a rating of A-1 by the Liverpool Maritime Exchange and was insured for 20,000 pounds in London did not dissuade most of members the crew of the stranded vessel from demanding their wages and finding subsequent employment on various luckier ships. When John Grant, the negro cook, boldly exclaimed, "Never mind, Captain, I'll stand by you whatever happens," he set a heroic example that induced half a dozen under seamen to remain with the ship's officers to flout superstition.

The Circassian was originally an iron steam vessel, built in 1856 in Belfast, Ireland, for S. S. DeWolf & Company of Liverpool, England. In 1874, only two years before, her engines had been

removed, and she was converted to a sailing vessel in Liverpool. The shiprigged British vessel left Liverpool on November 6 en route to New York. The crew, comprising some thirty-five British seamen, was captained by thirty-five-year-old Richard Williams, a Welshman. A substantial error in his compass accounted for his ship's running aground on the Bar during what was probably his first assignment to pilot a ship to America.

The following day, December 12, the charge of the Circassian was turned over to the Coast Wrecking Company, which contracted to save the stranded vessel and its cargo, which was insured for \$90,000. All of the able-bodied braves on the Shinnecock Reservation—ten in number—were recruited to augment the crew of the wrecking company. Employment close to the reservation doubtless made a strong appeal, especially to those Shinnecocks who had done hitches on whalers. Except for one, all were family men.

The work of unloading the



Circassian (right foreground) Among British Blockade Runners Captured by U. S. in 1862. Copied by Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Va., from 1862 Issue of Harpers' Weekly.

cargo so that the grounded ship could float off the outer Bar with high tide went forward from December 12 with the vessel lying on an even keel. By Friday, December 29, about one-third of the freight—a "coarse" one, consisting largely of soda ash, with some baking powder, caustic soda, soda crystals, bath bricks, etc.—had been unloaded, despite a high wind and an angry sea. All of the water had been pumped out, and everything was favorable for working the ship off the Bar with a very high tide expected that Friday night.

On Friday morning, however, the shifting wind increased in velocity, and the sea ran high. Unfortunately, the work of unloading was suspended, and the delay proved fatal. At ten o'clock Charles A. Pierson, the agent of the Coast Wrecking Company, with ten men left the laboring vessel for shore about six hundred feet away. The parting warning to send a line ashore, maintaining communication with land, was ignored. This was the second mistake. The Wrecking Company feared that the Indians and sailors would desert, using the line to flee prematurely to safety, when a heavy bank of clouds in the northeast presaged a gale. The receding stern of the surfboat was the final direct communication of the Circassian with land. Tragedy closed in on the thirty-two men, in charge of Captain John Lewis of the Coast Wrecking Company, left aboard the grounded vessel.

As the wind increased and the gale developed, the sea began to wash over the stranded vessel. Soon after one o'clock Captain Lewis slackened the two cables and allowed the ship to ride the mountainous seas more easily. At three o'clock her stern swung more to the westward, and the seas broke over her with redoubled force. About an hour later Captain Lewis ordered the hawsers cut. In-

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The Indians of Long Island

ORIGINALLY published in 1950, this brief treatment of the Long Island Indians is again being made available. It makes no pretense of being a complete history or of covering the subject in any great detail. It does, however, touch upon all the basic phases of the local Indians' way of life which in some respects differed from that of the mainland tribes. To those who would go further into these phases, we would suggest the chapter written by the late John H. Morice in Bailey's two-volume island history, published by the Lewis Historical Publishing Company, New York, in 1949, and available at most of the island's public and school libraries. Mr. Morice went into considerable detail and produced what is undoubtedly the most thorough treatment of the subject ever printed.

We might add, too, that in the files of the Long Island Forum, also available for reference at most of the island's public libraries, in bound volumes, may be found a wealth of information on the subject. To assist those who wish to use this source, we give the following list of such contributions by various authors prior to this year:

- 1938: October and December issues.
- 1939: January and April.
- 1940: February and September.
- 1941: June, July, September to December.
- 1942: January, June, October.
- 1943: May to July, September and October.
- 1944: January to September.
- 1945: July.
- 1946: March, May, August.
- 1947: January, March, July, October to December.
- 1948: May and July.
- 1949: January, July, August, November, December.
- 1950: March, April, December.

Paul Bailey

Suffolk County Historian

- 1951: February, May, September.
- 1952: July, October, November.
- 1953: January, March, October.
- 1954: April, October.
- 1955: January, June, July, August.

The Indian population of Long Island could not have been large. Within the island's little more than 1300 square miles dwelt 13 so-called tribes of Delaware - Algonkians in separate areas averaging only 10 miles square.

Daniel Denton, writing in 1670, 35 years after the first white settlement on the island, declared that "to say something of the Indians, there is now but few upon the Island, and those few no way hurtful but rather serviceable to the English, and it is to be admired how strangely they have decreast by the Hand of God, since the English first settling of those parts."

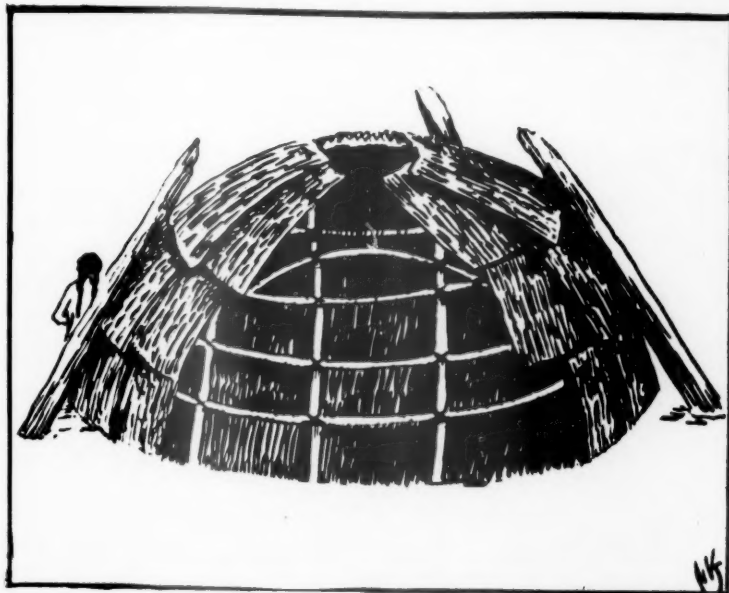
Denton continued, with evident

satisfaction at the rapid decline of the red race here: "Since my time, where there were six towns, they are reduced to two small Villages, and it hath been generally observed that where the English come to settle, a Divine Hand makes way for them, by removing or cutting off the Indians either by Wars one with the other, or by some raging mortal Disease."

In his history of New York, published 62 years after Denton's so-called "Brief Description," Judge William Smith wrote that the Indians of the island had become very inconsiderable and that those still living usually bound themselves as servants to the white men. Which would seem to show that tribal life was virtually at an end by 1732.

The first human inhabitants of Long Island came here from the West Coast several centuries after their ancestors had arrived there from Asia by way of Alaska. Archaeologists have found traces of nomadic people at the east end of the island.

The 13 tribes living here at the beginning of the white era were as follows:



Homebuilders of the 1600's.
Courtesy Robert R. Coles

Canarsees (meaning "at the fenced place"), Kings County and part of Jamaica in Queens.

Rockaways ("sandy land"), Rockaway peninsula, part of Jamaica, Maspeth, south shore from Jamaica to Baldwin and, according to Morice, a narrow strip extending to the north shore through Hempstead town.

Merricks ("plains country"), Baldwin to Seaford and, according to Jacqueline Overton, a considerable part of the Hempstead Plains.

Massapequas ("great water-land"), Seaford to Copiague.

Secatogues ("black or colored land"), Copiague to Bayport.

Unkechaugs ("land beyond the hill"), Bayport to Eastport.

Shinnecocks ("at the level land"), Eastport to Bridgehampton.

Montauks ("fortified place"), Bridgehampton to Montauk Point, also Gardiner's Island.

Manhansets ("island sheltered by islands"), Shelter, Ram, Hog and other nearby islands.

Corchaugs ("principal place"), Orient Point to Wading River.

Setaukets ("land at mouth of river"), Wading River to Stony Brook.

Nissequogs ("clay country"), Stony Brook to Nissequog river in Smithtown.

Matinecocks ("at the hilly land"), Nissequog river to Newtown at west end of island.

Charles Wooley, a minister of the Church of England, who spent the years 1678-79 on Long Island, described the Indians as follows:

"Most of them are between five or six feet high, straight bodied and

strongly composed. In complexion of a clayish colour, the hair of their heads generally black, lank and long hanging down. Their hair being naturally black, they make it more so by oyling, dyeing and daily dressing, yet though they be very careful about the hair of their heads yet they will not endure any upon their chins, where it no sooner grows than they take it out by the roots or scrape it off with a kind of razor made out of bone."

The mate on Henry Hudson's Half Moon (1609) entered the following in his journal: "They go in deer skins, loose well dressed. They grease their bodies and hair very often and paint their faces with several colours, as black, white, red, yellow, etc. which they take great pride in, everyone being painted in a different manner."

They wore aprons front and rear and, in winter, a skin or hemp robe. Bags suspended by thongs from the neck served as pockets. Skin mocasins, leggings and a belt were worn by braves and squaws alike. Wampum was worn in strings and was often stitched to their garments. It was also made into bracelets, armlets and earrings.

This wampum, which served as the Indians' medium of exchange, was made of clam and periwinkle shells and consisted of blue beads and white beads, the former having more value. The wampum made by the south shore tribes was considered of better than average quality. Eventually the white men imported little steel awls called mux-

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A Famous Sail-Maker

WE all know of the famous yacht race in 1851 when the America won the British cup which, in spite of many a brave race, still stays on this side of the Atlantic. But how many know that it was the cut of the sails that won that race, and that the man who built them was R. H. Wilson of Port Jefferson?

Over a hundred years ago, there was a strike in the sail-makers' union in New York. This, by the way, is said to be the oldest union in the United States. And well had they reason to be proud and haughty, for a man must have traveled a long hard road before he could qualify as a full-fledged sailmaker. Seven years as an apprentice, a year on a sailing ship, and a summer with a circus, (as tent maker), made up the course.

Now Boss Bayles in Port Jefferson was in the habit of having the sails for his boats made in New York. He could not afford to be held up like this, so he asked R. H. Wilson to come to Port Jefferson and take the job. In those days of canvas sails, no long floor was needed, the sails were cut in the Bayles kitchen. In 1837 Mr. Wilson set up for himself. He used to tell a tale of the man under whom he learned his trade.

It seemed that this man was very regular in his church attendance, but he, so to speak, took his knitting with him. He would come to church with a pocket-full of rope-ends and, by the time the service was over, that pocket was empty, but another was full of neatly made grommets, the eyelets used in the sails.

The Wilson sail-loft was a success but it meant plenty of hard work for master and man. No tasks were too hard, even making repairs on a ship in bitter freezing weather, then their chapped hands left a trail of blood, but the master's hands were bloody also.

Kate W. Strong

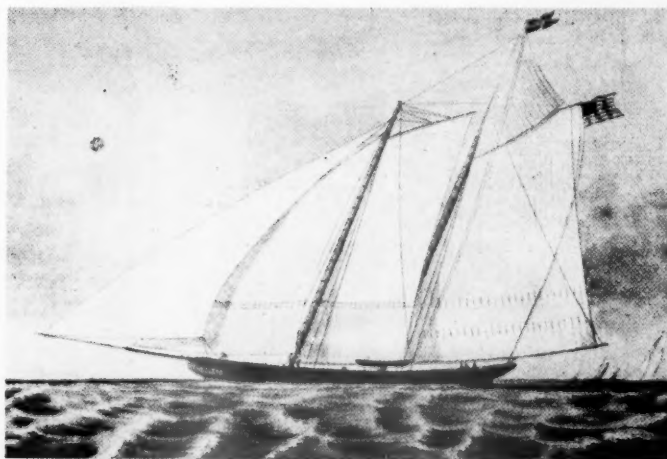
Fashions change in sails as well as clothes. Cotton duck sails became the proper thing. Hemp duck is a 'streechie' material but sails, cut out flat from cotton duck, held very little wind. Mr. Wilson tried using the same material, but he shaped his sails like a bird's wing. A sailing master for one of the fine yachts saw his model and, as he was getting his vessel ready for an important race, had him make him a suit of sails, but the owner would not let him use them, and the boat was beaten. Next day, at the sailing master's request, they sailed the same course with the new sails and won easily.

The designer, Mr. Steers, of the America took note of this incident and had Mr. Wilson make his sails, and, with them, won the cup. A few years ago, before the death of the last of the Wilson sail-makers, if you were fortunate enough to find the late Mr. Wilson in, he would take you up the winding stairs to the loft where, alas, all was silence after over a hundred years of activity.

On the walls of Mr. Wilson's

office hung the plans for the sails of the America, and those for the famous slave-ship Wanderer. In the great books of sail plans, one would find hints, in the brief notes, of many an adventure. Here, the Ocean Child carried arms to Nicaragua. There, another fled without paying her bills and was caught stealing seals in Alaskan waters. Saddest of all was the fate of one which was lost with all hands.

Perhaps, also, Mr. Wilson could introduce you to Rosie, the famous doll. Full 20 inches long she was, carved of wood with finely formed hands and feet and cleverly fitted joints. Made long ago by Mr. Wilson's great - great - great - grandfather, I fully believe Rosie was a portrait of someone. Blue bead eyes glared out fiercely enough to frighten any child and when you turned her sideways you found the hooked nose and double chin of an old lady. They said her hair was white once, but time had destroyed those sheepskin locks and no one knew the pattern of her original clothing, but the blue eyes still stared fiercely and she seemed like some old figurehead guarding the lone-



Yacht America of 1851

Sail-Maker

Continued from Page 147

ly loft — that loft where, under Mr. Wilson's guidance, one could, in imagination, go back to the busy days of yore when the place hummed with industry and sails made there went forth bravely to battle many a gale and hurricane upon the seven seas.

Now the loft is torn down, and what became of the sail plans and of Rosie, I have not been able to find out. If any reader knows, please tell me. I would like to see them again.

MacNish's Hotel

Continued from Page 142

very regular pattern, which is quite unusual for such an old settlement.

Perhaps its greatest fame accrued some fifty-odd years ago when one of the earliest submarines, a product of Inventor Holland, was brought here, completed in a local building and put

through experimental runs in nearby waters. It is said local oystermen dredging around nearby Robins Island lost a lot of time watching these experiments, but by then there were very few summer boarders at MacNish's Hotel to join in the watching. The principal excitement for the last of these boarders was to gather at the dock with local people to watch the arrival of the steamboat W. W. Coit (Captain Gibbs) which made regular runs between there and New York.

Clarence Russel Comes
Cutchogue

Indians of Long Island

Continued from page 146

es and with them made so much wampum that it brought about inflation and in time the complete abandonment of wampum by Indians and whites alike.

Indian abodes on Long Island were made of sapplings joined at the top and covered with thatch, skins and clay. Individual habitations were circular while those hous-

ing two or more families were long and tunnel-shaped. In every abode were two low entrances in opposite sides and each family unit had its own smoke-hole overhead.

Numerous gods and spirits with a great Manitou over all were worshipped by these tribes. Evil spirits were bribed with sacrificial offerings by individuals and groups. Religious ceremonies included those for burial and marriage and mass celebrations which sometimes became riotous in their fervor.

The Algonkian tongue was spoken by local Indians. There were relatively few words and no written characters other than crude pictures. Symbols were used for names of persons and places. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison visited

Continued on page 157

WANTED: Genealogical data pertaining to the Abrams family anywhere on Long Island. Please address L. I. Forum, Box 805, Amityville.

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FARMINGDALE, N. Y.

Wreck of the *Circassian*

Continued from page 144

stead of the ship's working her way towards safety in the open sea, however, she began to thump without apparent damage upon the Bar. Even at four o'clock there was no anxiety felt ashore for the safety of those trapped on the *Circassian*.

At five o'clock the gale metamorphosed into a veritable hurricane. With the ship thumping heavier and heavier upon the Bar, she soon began to take in water. About six o'clock the men came up from supper to find that the water had risen three or four inches above the between decks. The relentless sea continued to break over her. The fires in the galleys and in the boilers were extinguished.

About seven o'clock all hands took to the forerigging, the life boats having been smashed to pieces by the water that poured over the decks. The deck planks heaved upwards, and ominous rattling noises indicated that the nuts were flying off the bolts as the ship settled and filled with water. Yawning gaps appeared in her bow, stern, and sides. Her iron doors, stove in by the heavy sea, were barricaded. Later the sea moderated somewhat, and the hands descended from the rigging to the deck.

At eight o'clock the mainmast snapped off like a pipe stem, carrying with it three men who had gone aloft for protection. At 8:30 a rocket was sent up from the wreck as a signal of distress. A wood fire was promptly started on shore to show that the distress signal had been observed. No boat could have remained afloat in that seething mass of white foam, even if the wooden boat belonging to Life Saving Station No. 10, which lay about forty rods east of the wreck, had been returned promptly from exhibition at the Centennial. The hull of the vessel was often lost completely to view as sea after sea broke over her,

but her foremast and mizzenmast gave evidence that she still held together.

At ten o'clock Captain Pier-son, standing on shore, heard a crash, followed by a cry from those gathered on the beach, "My God, she's breaking in half!" An opening was discerned in her side near the foremast. All hands rushed to take refuge in the mizzen rigging, where they lashed themselves and clung for their lives as the cold chilled them to the marrow and the spray froze on them instantly.

As the night wore on, attempt after attempt was made to establish connection with the doomed seamen awaiting their watery grave, and each failure measured their purchase upon life. Boats that were launched were driven back upon the beach. Mortars were brought into service—one from Life Saving Station No. 10 and another from Life Saving Station No. 17. Several balls with a rope attached were catapulted into the teeth of the fierce wind, but only one of the cords reached the ship. Its hold was not very secure, and it presently glided ineffectually into the sea. The slender thread upon which the despairing seamen's lives

depended snapped forever. Finally the last charge in the magazine was rammed into the mortar, but the ball fell short in carrying the sand-clogged rope to the foundering target. With this charge the mortar whanged the death knell of the ill-fated crew.

The ship gradually went to pieces from 12:30 until the crisis came about 4:30 Saturday morning. As the seamen, lashed to the iron mizzenmast, shouted for help and prayed for Divine intervention, the ship parted again at three o'clock in the morning. There has been some doubt whether the sound of the seamen's pleas could have been heard above the tumult of the wind and the crash of the breakers. Every newspaper account verified the fact that their voices were audible to those gathered on the beach. The Herald maintained that "amid the howling of the tempest and the roar of the waves, there were borne to our ears the voices of the poor fellows in the rigging, singing hymns and praying in chorus to God." The Times asserted that "in the midst of the din and confusion which rose above the fury of the gale and the loud crash of the breakers upon the sinking

Continued on page 153



Clipper Ship "Sovereign of the Seas", from Famous Painting by Alexander Brede.

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Capt. MacDermott, L. I. Whaler

Not many years after the close of the Revolution in 1783 a Scotchman by name of James H. MacDermott, having arrived in American waters from his native heath as a sailor, jumped ship somewhere along the southwest shore of Chesapeake Bay and, like many another ambitious foreigner of that day, settled down in this country. Having located at Edenton, N. C., there he married and there in 1810 was born a son who was given the name of James Harrison Daniel MacDermott. Like his father who died in 1811, young James in time took to the sea and eventually came north on a schooner with a cargo of yellow pine consigned to Riverhead which was just then beginning to grow into one of Peconic Bay's principal communities.

From Riverhead MacDermott hiked eastward through the North Fork to Orient, then known as Oysterponds, where he signed up on another schooner plying between there, New York, Kingston on the Hudson and certain New England ports. In August 1847 he sailed from Greenport on his first whaling voyage aboard the Neva, commanded by Capt. Nathaniel Case of Peconic. Outfitted and managed by Ireland, Wells & Carpenter of Greenport, the Neva sailed south, rounded the Horn into the Pacific and on May 3, 1851 returned to Greenport with a cargo of whaleoil and bone valued at \$50,000.

On the Vera's next voyage, Jim MacDermott went along as a bridegroom, having only a few days before the ship's departure in October 1851, married Polly Ann Tutthill, daughter of Daniel Ezra Tutthill, a successful Orient farmer. MacDermott was one of the Neva's several boatsteerers or harpooners, a very important post on any whaling voyage. When the vessel returned to Greenport June 12, 1854, she brought an \$83,000 cargo in which MacDermott shared sufficiently to acquire a master's interest in the schooner Monitor, belonging to Capt. Daniel Clark of East Marion, brother of J. E. Clark, the local miller. Before long the MacDermotts settled on the farm of his wife's parents who had both died of pneumonia.

It is worthy of note that the old Tutthill farmhouse, on the east side of Dam road, between the Sound and the present causeway leading to Orient, is still standing and well preserved. The farm itself goes back to 1640 when the site was acquired from the Corchaug Indians by Samuel Crook. A grandson of the MacDermotts, Willard Edwin Rackett, is at this writing

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Capt. MacDermott

Continued From Page 150

residing in his 98th year at East Marion. He is the son of Thomas and Cordia Rackett, the latter a daughter of James and Polly Ann Tuthill MacDermott. As for James MacDermott, he died in 1896 at the age of 86.

Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood
Senior Contributing Editor

That Old Time Hymn

In the March issue of the Forum, Mrs. Hill of Oyster Bay made inquiry as to the composer of "It's Christmas Day by the River".

I have a copy of Carols published by J. Church & Co. and copyrighted in 1883, used by my mother and father.

The first line of one of the songs is "It is Christmas Day by the River, It is Christmas Day by the Bay", etc. The song is titled "Christmas on the Sea" and was composed by H. Butterworth and G. F. Root.

I wonder if this is the song Mrs. Hill had in mind.

J. Laurence Davis
Mattituck

Queens and Nassau Trolleys

A history of the New York & North Shore Traction Company which once provided rail transportation through the northerly part of Nassau County as far west as Flushing has been compiled by Vincent F. Seyfried, a past master at writing on such subjects. Its more than 70 pages are packed with data including a good many photos. It is a fine piece of work, worthy of a place in every Long Island home and library and well worth the price of \$2.50 for which it will be sent postpaid by addressing Felix E. Reifschneider, Box 774, Orlando, Florida.

Industrial Suffolk County

A brochure entitled "Suffolk County, The Industrial Frontier" is being circulated by The Long Island Association's Suffolk County Industrial Development Council. It will be sent without charge to business people and others interested. It is an attractive, well illustrated production that briefly presents an excellent picture of this all important subject.

The committee which prepared the brochure was headed by Edward McGowan of Bay Shore.

My sister has been visiting us and enjoyed reading the Forum, which we have taken for some years, so I wish to send her a subscription. Mrs. Clifford H. Prince, Shelter Island.

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Although Mr. Christman or his farm are not of Long Island, his essays will appeal to Islanders for his is the language and his the thought that apply wherever people live beneath open skies. The book sells for \$3 and is procurable from the publishers, the Taylor-Powell Press, Cooperstown, N. Y.

Remembers "Sam Porridge"

In reading Dr. John C. Huden's "L. I. Indian Names and Words" (June Forum), the definition of Somp, "a special hulled corn", recalled my childish appetite of long ago. When I was married in 1894 (we celebrated our 62nd anniversary on May 30 last) I remember cooking Somp (we eastenders called it Sam Porridge) until it could not be purchased anymore

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because the salad-cocktail age had arrived.

Our Sam Porridge dinner came every Saturday night at five o'clock (timed by the same wooden-works clock I still have here in my Brooklyn home). Then it would be warmed up for Sunday noon dinner—a big iron kettle full of delicious eating, containing all the vitamins in the alphabet, although we didn't know or worry about vitamins then.

With Indian Baked Pudding for dessert, what more could mortals ask for, after driving home from a lengthy sermon and a long prayer at the Old First Church of Southold? To make Somp my great-grandfather Deacon Austin Haines pounded the corn in a large tree-stump which he had hollowed into a bowl. His wooden pestle was hung on an arm that worked like a pump handle. When the corn was fine enough he put it in a pan which he held up to the four winds that blew away the hulls, permitting the Somp, thoroughly winnowed, to drop to a large white cloth that he had spread on the ground.

Great-Grandma Harmony Haines's recipe for cooking it was to wash the Somp, put a pint in an iron pot of cold water at night to soak till morning on the back of the wood-burning kitchen range. After breakfast she would wash the Somp again and add half-a-cup of white beans, then put it over the fire with plenty of water to keep it from scorching. Later it would receive three or four pounds of corned beef and a small piece of corned pork from the barrel in the cellar. As the Somp became tender, potatoes and yellow turnips were added and when it was all properly cooked it was fit food, even for the minister, who sometimes got it warmed over for Monday dinner when he came calling.

Cooking and housekeeping were quite different then from now. In the Fall cellars were filled with potatoes and other vegetables, the barrel of pork, hams, sausage hanging in muslin bags, apples, sugar by the barrel, tea by the box. We grew our own wheat, corn,

Continued on page 156

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Circassian

Continued from page 149

vessel, the voices of those brave seamen could be heard chanting religious hymns, until at length their songs were hushed forever." The Eagle averred that "the utterances of those on the doomed vessel were at times audible, but they grew fewer and weaker until only the moan of anguish and the plaintive cry of despair reached the ear."

About 4:30 the long-dreaded crisis came. A tremendous swell struck the vessel, raising her aloft very high. She descended with a terrific jolt, that sent the mizzenmast over the side with its living adherents crowded in its rigging. Nothing thereafter could be seen of the wreck except a small part forward. This is probably the part of the hull that H. B. Squires of Bridgehampton reported (Forum, Jan. 1943) having

seen a few years before.

Providence withheld its mercy from all but four of the crew, who miraculously escaped the cold clutches of Neptune as they were borne ashore on one of the cork lifeboat buoys. Although they had been in the water only three to five minutes, they barely crawled to the edge of the surf, where they lay benumbed and helpless. Members of a patrol established five miles down the beach carried them in an exhausted condition into the life saving station, where their clothing had to be cut off their half-frozen bodies.

No clemency by Providence was granted a single one of the Shinnecocks, despite their proficiency as swimmers. One of the survivors, the first mate of the Circassian said that he had given a life-preserver to one of the Shinnecocks named Walker and that

the Indian had fastened it around his body when he lashed himself to the mast. But he perished with the others when the iron mizzenmast careened and dropped with a hiss into the seething sea.

Within a fortnight the bodies, stiff with rigor mortis and partly frozen, were washed ashore by the strong easterly current at different points as far away as Montauk Beach. The bodies of Captain Lewis and of the three engineers were claimed by relatives and friends, fourteen of the bodies were buried by the Town of East Hampton, and those of the Shinnecocks were buried by the people of Southampton. The Indians had rejected employment on a whaler, for jobs as wreckers on the Circassian in order to remain near their homes on the reservation. Fate was ironically complain-

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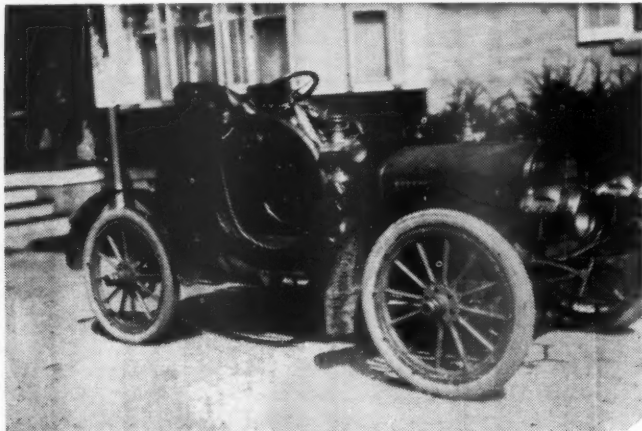
Motorists of 1908

A clipping comes from Horace K. T. Sherwood of Long Beach, California, one time mayor of Glen Cove, from a New York newspaper during the summer of 1908 which tells of seven automobiles that arrived at Roe's Hotel in Patchogue after a run from Glen Cove. "As the automobiles entered

the village," reads the 1908 item, "they attracted much attention by their neatness and beauty."

To quote further: "There were six Buick roundabouts and one Thomas racer. The visitors called themselves a Buick outing party, from the Glen Cove Garage Company. All in the group are well

Continued next page



Mr. Sherwood's 1908 Buick.

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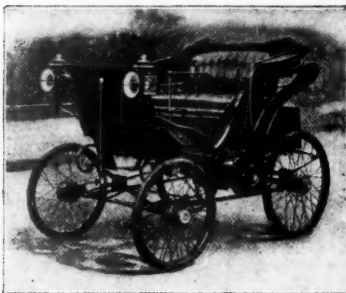
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Motorists of 1908

Continued from page 154

known residents of Glen Cove. The excursionists returned last night to Glen Cove by way of Huntington."

Others in the party besides Mr. Sherwood were James Townsend, Archie Tappen, Lewis Titus, Edward R. Wheeler, Harry Hedger, Ward Dickson, L. T. Simonson, Frank Baldwin, R. Frank Downe, S. Townsend Titus, Corbin Wheel-



Who Can Name It?

er, George E. Hawkins, Frank Humbert, Dr. J. D. Sayre and H. M. Schleicher.

Mr. Sherwood, an avid reader of the Forum whose occasional letters are always interesting, lays his less frequent messages of late to having "accepted a position in the cost accounting division of the comptroller's office of the U. S. Naval Shipyard at Long Beach" after a period of well earned retirement.

Sag Harbor's Notables

Another of my Sag Harbor schoolmates was Eugene Fenelon who, like the Mulligan brothers, Wick Havens, Blanche Rene and others who escape my memory, migrated to California besides George Sterling and myself. Many years ago it was my pleasure to visit Fenelon at this home in Newport Beach, California, of which he was then mayor. He also had an orange grove and was very successful.

Another Sag Harbor schoolmate of mine who made good was Tom Howard. He advanced to superintendent of the Elgin Watch fac-

tory and while I was teaching in the Elgin schools he took me all through the plant personally.

I can understand why your fine magazine is so widely read by Long Islanders everywhere.

H. N. Fordham
Costa Mesa, Cal.

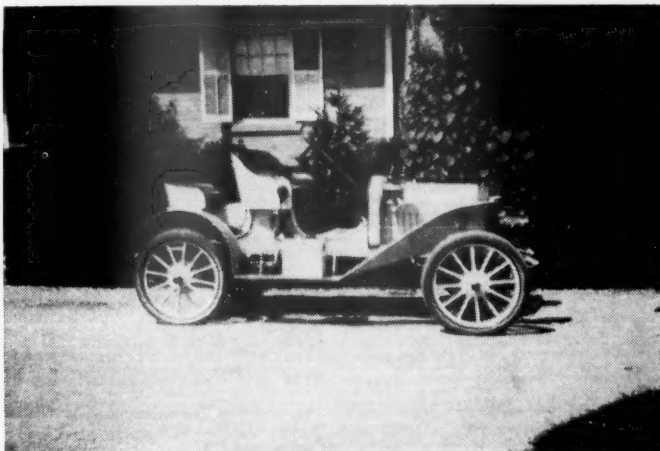
The Long Island Forum continues to be a valuable source of island history. (Mrs.) Martha K. Hall, Librarian, Huntington Historical Society.

Fox Fire?

We all enjoy the Forum so much. I gave one to a neighbor and she asked me what Fox Fire was. I really didn't know either.

Mrs. Elmer Hill
Northport

Note: Julian Denton Smith, our Nature Editor, declares Fox Fire to be, according to one dictionary: "The luminescence of decaying wood due to certain fungi . . . also, such a fungus".



Mr. Sherwood's 1905 Acme

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"Sam Porridge"

Continued from page 152

buckwheat, etc., and kept cows, chickens, pigs and sheep. Great-Grandma Harmony had her spinning wheel and carding pads. She made homespun linen pillow-cases, sheets, tablecloths, and beautiful soft white woolen blankets. They carded the wool which was woven at a plant in Riverhead. I have an indigo-blue and white coverlet that has her name and 1830 woven in it.

She made the household candles, dipping the wick in the hot oil or



wax again and again until graceful white candles were ready for the brass candlesticks. On their farm there was plenty of room for us

children to play. There was the garret, full of treasures; the barn, so nice for rainy days; the orchards and the woods where trailing arbutus grew in abundance.

No cooking or other work was done on the Sabbath. It was a day of rest, worship and a Sam Porridge mid-day meal. But we had our weekday diversions a plenty such as milking the cows, churning the butter, gathering hickory nuts down the lane; also temperance lectures, musicals, donation parties for the Dominy whose salary was

Continued on next page

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Indians of Long Island

Continued from page 148

General William Floyd at Mastic in 1791 and collected a list of 162 words from the Unkechaugs. John Lyon Gardiner also listed some words used by the Montauks.

Local Indians built no birch bark canoes. Their craft was a dugout, shaped from a single tree-trunk by charring and scraping. These dugouts ranged in size from the one-man type to the 40-man seagoing craft used by Grand Sachem Wyandance. The whaling dugout held four or five men.

The form of government of the Long Island Indians was simple. Each tribe had its own sachem who presided at tribal meetings and served as judge as well as executive. Manhansets, Montauks, Corchaugs and Shinnecocks maintained a protective league and with the other tribes, excepting the Canarsees, were united in an island-wide federation over which Wyandance ruled as Grand Sachem.

The Indians of Long Island were hunters, fishermen and whalers. They were also agricultural and had gardens in which the squaws did most of the work. They made baskets, wampum, arrow points, fish-hooks and pottery. They grew hemp from which twine, nets and cloth were produced. Their chief diet was game, fish and Indian corn made into cakes.

They were especially adept at offshore-whaling, possibly because the ocean here was the winter habitat of numerous right-whales. Using never less than two dug-outs, their procedure called for intercepting the whale off the outer beach and driving it ashore where men, women and children joined in dispatching the stranded victim with spears, hatchets and knives or leaving it helpless to succumb to its wounds.

From these people the early east end colonists learned the rudiments and with improved methods such as light cedar boats and iron harpoons became America's first white offshore-whalers. For some generations, however, they continued to recognize their red neighbors as the most skillful and employed them when possible to hurl the harpoon and to wield the lance.

A wonderful magazine!
Harry L. Dayton, Bayside.

Correction

Thanks for your nice article in the July Forum about Village House and Oysterponds Historical Society. The publicity is much appreciated.

However, I noted that you had me listed as first President of our Society. This is an error. A. Nelson Chapman was the first President.

Will you be good enough, for the record, to print a correction in your August issue?

George R. Latham Mineola

Old Time L. I. Dinners

The letter in the July Forum regarding the Long Island dinners held at the Hotel St. Denis was enjoyed by some of us who were there because of the memories associated with them. Later the dinners were held at the Hotel Astor, and I remember hearing Theodore Roosevelt and also the late Mayor Gaynor from the Speakers' Platform. It was then that Frank L. Newton of Ronkonkoma first introduced me to the Hawkins boys (of baseball fame).

We couldn't get along without

the Forum. Glad your book of historic poems will soon be published.

Jesse Merritt
Nassau County Historian

"Sam Porridge"

Continued from page 156

\$600 a year. He often walked five miles and back to lead a cottage prayer meeting, as he kept no horse. Yet he sent his children to college and lived to be ninety-six years old.

As for his widespread flock, we had our square dances, town meeting, visiting relatives and friends on other farms, picnics at Horton's Point Lighthouse, and, last but not least, cousins! There were cousins to right of us, cousins to left of us, and cousins all around us. Every day some of them came for dinner or tea. Then Great-Grandfather Haines would chop off a rooster's head; Great Grandmother Harmony would drop it in the pot, and cousins would get it roasting hot.

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A Fashion Showing at Dior's

Six design students, three girls and three young men, sit in the first row, right, as the model passes in a front-bowed gown and wide-brimmed hat which herald the new Gainsborough look introduced recently by Dior. This affair illustrates one of the many rare treats arranged for its students by the Traphagen School of Fashion, 1680 Broadway (52nd St.), New York. This trip to the Fifth Avenue showroom of Christian Dior—New York, Inc., where these pupils had the privilege of viewing the collection of this celebrated designer,

is an experience any woman would enjoy, and a young designer eternally treasures. Prized above the many usual field trips which Traphagen arranges for its students, members of the group that visited Dior's showing were hand-picked as a reward for their outstanding ability and application. Since this exclusive house usually accommodates only professional guests in its audiences, Traphagen greatly valued this most generous gesture of cooperation with the school, students and faculty. Virtue may be its own reward, but a little impetus along the way can be a great fillip and inspiration to serious hard-working young students.

**Coast to Coast**

I enclose check for subscription. Some California friends have shown me the Forum and I find it very interesting.

I am a descendant of Sam Randall. My father, Whitman Vail Randall was born in Coram. I was born in Southampton. My mother's maiden name was Lina Ailetta Fanning of Hampton Bays.

Mrs. George H. Booth
2006 Huntington
Redondo, California

The photo of the Conklin barn near Greenport in the June number brought back childhood days. Went there hundreds of times as "Dick" Conklin had lovely horses and it was only a little west of our farm. (Mrs.) Eva Parson, New York.

We look forward to each number of this publication. Mrs. Henry D. Mills, Patchogue.

I do enjoy the Forum. A great magazine. Ray Carr, Floral Park.

I wish for you and the Forum all the best of good wishes, and hope that it will grow bigger, but it can't grow any better. Louis T. Vail, New Port Richey, Florida.

A Venerable Reader

I like the Forum very much and enjoy reading it. You see, I happen to be an old Long Islander. If I live until August 23d I will celebrate my 95th—all lived on Long Island. (Rev.) W. F. Rohm, Pastor, People's Baptist Church, Sag Harbor.

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Poetess Ellen S. Mowbray

In reading "Some Preliminary Remarks" to William Wallace Tooker's "Indian Place-Names on Long Island" (1911), I noted his reference to Ellen S. Mowbray, a Long Island poetess, and to one of her poems, "Hauppaug(e) Sweet Waters". Would some reader tell us through the Forum something further about this writer and her poetry?

Carl A. Starace
Amityville

Amateur Artists!

The Suffolk Museum at Stony Brook is staging an award exhibition for L. I. amateur artists (oil and watercolor) July 29 through August 19. For particulars address Miss Margaret V. Wall, Director, at the Museum.

I have enjoyed reading the Forum. Mrs. Eversley Childs, Crane Neck Farm, Setauket.

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